

CLAIMS

1. A method for modifying gum arabic which comprises a step of heating the gum arabic at a temperature of not less than 40°C 5 in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 30-100%.
2. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, wherein the gum arabic is heated in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 70-100%.
10
3. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, wherein the gum arabic is heated under closed-system constant-humidity conditions.
- 15 4. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, which comprises a step of heating the gum arabic at a temperature of 40-100°C in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 30-80%.
- 20 5. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 4, wherein the gum arabic is heated in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 70-80%.
- 25 6. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, which comprises a step of heating the gum arabic at a temperature of 60-150°C in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of 80-100%

and cooling it to a temperature of not exceeding room temperature in an atmosphere having a relative humidity of not more than 75%.

5 7. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 6, wherein the gum arabic is heated at a temperature of 60-100°C.

8. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, which comprises a step of heating the gum arabic at a temperature 10 of 60-150°C in a closed-system atmosphere having a relative humidity of 80-100% and then cooling it to room temperature in an open system.

9. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 15 8, wherein the gum arabic is heated at a temperature of 60-100°C.

10. The method for modifying gum arabic according to Claim 1, which is a method for enhancing the emulsifying ability of gum arabic.

20

11. A modified gum arabic obtained by the method according to Claim 1.

12. An emulsifier comprising the modified gum arabic obtained 25 by the method according to Claim 1 as an active ingredient.

13. A method for preparing an emulsion which comprises using the modified gum arabic obtained by the method according to Claim 1 as an emulsifier.

5

14. The method for preparing an emulsion according to Claim 13 wherein the emulsion is an O/W or W/O/W emulsion which contains, as a dispersoid, at least one hydrophobic substance selected from the group consisting of essential oils, oily flavorings, 10 oily colors, fat-soluble vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids, animal or vegetable oils, sucrose acetate isobutyrate, and medium-chain triglycerides.

15. An emulsion prepared by the method according to Claim 13.

15

16. The emulsion according to Claim 15 which is an O/W or W/O/W emulsion which contains, as a dispersoid, at least one hydrophobic substance selected from the group consisting of essential oils, oily flavorings, oily colors, fat-soluble vitamins, 20 polyunsaturated fatty acids, animal or vegetable oils, sucrose acetate isobutyrate, and medium-chain triglycerides.